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COLUMBIA

MASTERWORKS

A Tribute to

Ernst Toch & Henry Cowell

Five Pieces for Winds & Percussion, Op. 83

Sonatinetta for Flute, Clarinet & Bassoon, Op. 84

The Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet

String Quartet No. 5 (1962)

The Beaux-Arts String Quartet

IN HONOR OF ERNST TOCH'S SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY AND HENRY COWELL'S SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

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Sonatinetta for Flute, Clarinet and Bassoon, Op. 84

The Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet Murray Panitz, Flute; John de Lancie, Oboe; Anthony Gigliotti, Clarinet; Bernard Garfield, Bassoon; Mason Jones, French Horn with Ward O. Fearn, French Horn; Fred D. Hinger and Charles E. Owen, Percussion

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Produced by Paul Myers

ERNST TOCH

Born in Vienna in 1887, Ernst Toch, by the age of seventeen, had composed chamber works which were being professionally performed. At the same age he entered the University of Vienna as a medical student. But the young self-taught composer won his first prize in 1909—the Mozart Stipend—and since one of the conditions of the prize was that the winner must reside in Frankfurt-on-Main and study there, Ernst Toch chose the career of music over medicine and left Vienna. In 1910 he won the Mendelssohn Prize in Berlin and began to study piano under the guidance of Willy Rehberg. He became an instructor of composition at the Mannheim Hochscule Für Musik in 1913 and won the Austrian State Prize in composition four consecutive years. With a thesis entitled *Melodielehre*, published in 1921 and subsequently translated into many languages, Toch was graduated as Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Heidelberg.

Berlin, which in the 1920's was among the most important music centers of the world, greeted Toch with immediate and unqualified acclaim. His compositions, recognized for their wealth of content, were extensively performed along with those of such contemporaries as Bartók, Honneger, Křenek, Milhaud, Schoenberg and Weill; they were premiered by Busch, Feuermann, Furtwaengler, Gieseking, Klemperer, Kleiber, Monteux, San Roma and Scherchen.

Major works from this period are two piano concertos, a cello concerto, orchestral pieces with voice *(Chinese Flute), Music for Orchestra and Baritone,* two chamber operas, *The Princess and the Pea, Egon and Emily* and the opera, *The Fan,* string quartets and piano works. At the 1930 Berlin Festival, the sensation of the season was Toch's *Gesprochene Musik.* By dispensing with staves and noteheads in the score, thus discarding pitch, and by indicating his enormously inventive rhythms and dynamics only, he presented a speaking chorus in a four-voice, strict fugue form, using geographical names and statements.

An invitation by Serge Koussevitzky to perform his own piano concerto with the Boston Symphony brought Toch to the United States in 1932. After a short sojourn in England, he returned to America and accepted teaching appointments at the New School for Social Research in New York, and later at the University of Southern California, where he occupied the Alchin Chair in Composition until 1948. Since 1936 he has made his permanent home in Santa Monica, California.

The masterful architectural design of the works of his American years, such as *Pinocchio,* several cantatas and his First Symphony, was displayed in performances led by Barbirolli, Koussevitsky, Leinsdorf, Mitropoulos, Ormandy, Reiner, Steinberg, Stokowski, Szell and Wallenstein.

Toch has been an influential teacher of outstanding composers and musicologists. His book, *The Shaping Forces in Music* (Criterion Music Corporation, 1948), enlarged from lectures at Harvard, is recognized by the introductory comments of Tedesco, Copland, Milhaud, Cowell, Lopatnikoff and Szigeti as a definitive work on composition.

Ernst Toch won the 1957 Pulitzer Prize, was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters the same year, and won the Grammy Award in 1960. Now celebrating his seventy-fifth birthday, he continues composing with extraordinary productivity and vitality (four symphonies within the last decade and currently at work on an opera) and with arresting dramatic power, strong masculine vigor and a bold and often apocalyptic vision. He is indeed, as the *Saturday Review* noted, "one of the significant figures of our time."

Toch composed his Five Pieces for Winds and Percussion in the spring of 1959, and they were first performed in October of that year by the Philharmonic Wind Quintet and assisting artists in Los Angeles. The first piece, *Canzonetta,* is scored for wind quartet only (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon) and each successive piece adds new instruments to the ensemble. All five movements are characterized by clean, unambiguous rhythms and a spontaneous and unstudied melodic-harmonic content; this is true divertimento music that sings and dances for the sheer joy of it. *Canzonetta* contains just enough canonic imitation to justify its title; it is a dreamy, almost indolent *Andante. Caprice* is also scored for wind quartet, but its final measures contain a surprise in the sudden appearance of a snare drum. *Night Song* makes use of the four woodwinds and two horns; the exquisite oboe melody at the outset of this piece (marked "With great tenderness and expression") could have been conceived by Tchaikovsky in one of his pensive moods. The last two movements are considerably longer than the first three and both employ, besides the sextet of woodwinds and horns, a fascinating battery of percussion. *Roundeley* is, as its title implies, in rondo form. The main section, which returns after each of the episodes, is marked *"Allegretto lusingando.* Gently flowing." The first episode ("Somewhat tighter") is a bumptious unison passage for the woodwinds, the second is a romantic *Adagio* with prominent parts for the two horns and the third is a curious dialogue between xylophone and the deeper winds. *Cavalcade,* the final piece, is exhilaratingly extroverted from its opening cymbal crash to the end. Toch's use of percussion reaches its culmination in this movement; besides xylophone, glockenspiel, vibraphone, suspended cymbal and tenor drum, the score calls for a set of five temple blocks.

The little Sonatinetta for Flute, Clarinet and Bassoon was commissioned by RIAS, the West German Radio Station "Freies Berlin" in the summer of 1959 and first performed over RIAS in late fall of the same year. It is a witty and succint work in three movements. The opening *Allegretto commodo* is obviously satirical, slightly weary and utterly delicious—in the manner of Poulenc and Jean Françaix. The slow middle movement is marked "With utmost tenderness"; it opens with a flute solo which becomes a duet with the entrance of the clarinet and finally a trio as the bassoon makes its appearance. The finale, *Allegro,* with its triplet and quadruplet groupings and its enticing second theme, is of the utmost delicacy.

HENRY COWELL

Born near San Francisco, March 11, 1897, Henry Cowell spent his childhood in an area in which the Celtic and American folk songs of his parents and the music of Asian playmates became equally natural to him. Although he began to compose as a boy, his first formal training in composition began when he was sixteen; he had begun to experiment with new musical ideas long before. On March 12, 1912, he gave the first public performance of his piano compositions, using broad chords of massed seconds which he called tone clusters.

Between 1923 and 1933 he made five tours of Europe with programs of his own compositions: such diverse personalities as Bartók and Prunières in Paris, Schnabel in Berlin and Kandinsky in Dessau sponsored his concerts. In 1932 Anton Webern conducted Cowell's *Sinfonietta* at one of his concerts in Vienna. For more than twenty-five years Cowell also made annual tours of the United States.

Following his experiments with tone clusters, Cowell began to discover new sonorities by directly plucking or striking the strings of the piano. He has achieved startling and beautifully atmospheric effects that are akin to those of Debussy, though more radically inventive. Less radical but of equal significance is the splendid series of *Hymns and Fuguing Tunes* for various combinations of instruments, including the orchestra.

From the Pacific Coast of California it was inevitable that a composer should look equally eagerly to Europe and to the Orient, seeing Occidental music as only one of many traditions within a worldwide art. So Cowell devoted almost as many years to the serious study of other musical systems as he did to harmony and counterpoint, and in 1931 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for the study of non-European music at the University of Berlin. One may find among his compositions many short pieces based on classic Asian, Indonesian and African rhythms and forms, along with sets and suites like *Toccanta, Persian Set, Ongaku, Homage to Iran,* and the larger integrations of his Fifth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Symphonies.

By his highly creative appropriation of basic forms and ideas from other parts of the world Cowell has, not for the first time in his career, significantly widened the horizons of Western symphonic art.

Under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Information Agency the Cowells made a trip around the world during 1956-1957, listening and lecturing in Ireland, Germany, Turkey, Lebanon, Iran, Pakistan and India. At the request of the Iranian Government, Cowell spent several months in Teheran as a consultant on broadcasting. There, he wrote his *Persian Set.* While in Tokyo during the Spring of 1957, Cowell composed *Ongaku* in homage to Japan. In 1961, Henry Cowell was invited to return to Japan to participate in the East-West Music Encounter, and during the same trip he received a similar invitation from Iran to return there and speak in Teheran.

"Henry Cowell's music covers a wider range in both expression and technique than that of any other living composer," writes composer-critic Virgil Thomson. And he adds: "No other composer of our time has produced a body of work so radical and so normal, so penetrating and so comprehensive. Add to this massive production his long and influential career as pedagogue, and Henry Cowell's achievement in music becomes impressive indeed. There is no other quite like it. To be both fecund and right is given to few."

Cowell's String Quartet No. 5 was commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation of the Library of Congress. Written in New York City during the spring and summer of 1956 it had its first public performance by the Juilliard String Quartet at Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., in October 1956. It was revised and published in 1962. The work is in five movements: *Lento; Allegro; Andante; Presto; Largo-Allegro marcato.*

The Fifth Quartet is a comparatively elaborate development from the styles of eighteenth century American hymnody that Cowell began about 1941 to build into the series of neo-Baroque hymns, paired with fuguing tunes, which are now widely associated with his name. This rural religious tradition carried the three-part modal hymns and the fuguing tunes of the earliest English and Scottish Reformation churches first to New England, from where it spread into the South and West. Until the radio radically changed our country music in the early 1930's, this tradition, perpetuating musical styles whose history can be traced back more than 300 years in Europe, was loved and actively practiced by more tens of thousands of Americans than any other—a fact of which sophisticated musicians in American cities were entirely unaware.

Cowell wondered what this fine old music might have become in the hands of American composers if nineteenth century musical conventions had not taught them to consider it crude and strange. So, by way of answering the question, each of his hymns and fuguing tunes is a different experiment in carrying forward, into twentieth century music, elements drawn from this early music. To date (1962), Cowell has written fourteen of these two-movement pieces, for different instrumental or vocal combinations, and he has also used the forms in larger works, as independent movements or parts of movements—for instance, in the Violin Sonata (1945), in seven of his fifteen symphonies, and in a number of full-length chamber works, of which this is one. The diatonic modal materials (but no actual tunes) are developed by means of a variety of related techniques that were acquired by Western music subsequent to the tradition's arrival in this country, and the treatment has proven to be increasingly dissonant and even chromatic in Cowell's hands. But the music is never atonal, since Cowell believes that the possibilities inherent in the immense variety of tonal systems in the world are far from having come to an end.

The present quartet is diatonic, but there is free interchange among modes and keys, and constantly flowing modulation in certain parts of the work. The counterpoint is harmonic, quartal or tertial in some places, secundal in others; it is sometimes dissonant and other times consonant. There is no extra-musical connotation. The composer says of the work: "It is just some music I felt I wanted to write."

The opening *Lento* is a much-modified hymn, in which the voices start together, low in the bass and high in the treble, moving toward each other as they approach the ends of phrases, and descending together into unison at the end of the movement.

The second movement, *Allegro,* is a rapid *stretto,* vigorous and definite in mood; it makes energetic use of secundal counterpoint.

The third movement, *Andante,* is gentle by contrast: a soft diatonic melody is colored by still softer chords in seconds.

The *Presto* is a rapid scherzo in asymetrical rhythm, whose typical four-measure phrase contains two bars of 6/8, one of 9/8 and one of 6/8 again. That is to say, the typical phrase consists of a pattern of 2 plus 2 plus 3 plus 2 beats. This movement opens in E minor, but within the first fourteen measures the music overflows, in a series of rapid modulations, into G Mixolydian, E Dorian, B Dorian, A major, F# minor, A Mixolydian, F# minor again, and F# Phrygian. The harmonic basis may be tertial, or secundal as in the rapid chromatic runs.

The last movement is in the manner of a hymn-and-fuguing tune. Its *Largo* is a development of the opening movement, whose tertial harmony unexpectedly borrows forbidden behavior from modal harmony, in the form of consecutive fifths and modal passing tones. The faster fuguing tune reverts twice to the slower pace of a hymn phrase before it acquires the momentum that carries its development of themes from earlier movements forcefully ahead to the work's conclusion.

Library of Congress catalog card numbers R 62-1339 and R 62-1341 apply to this record.

TOCH:
FIVE PIECES FOR
WIND INSTRUMENTS AND PERCUSSION
THE PHILADELPHIA WOODWIND QUINTET
(Murray Panitz, Flute; John de Lancie, Oboe;
Anthony Gigliotti, Clarinet; Bernard Garfield, Bassoon;
Mason Jones, French Horn) with Fred Hinger, Charles
Owen and Ward Fearn, Percussion
1. I - Canzonetta 2. II - Caprice 3. III - Night Song
4. IV - Roundeley 5. V - Cavalcade

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NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 1
(x"Lp"57514)

TOCH: SONATINETTA FOR FLUTE, CLARINET
AND BASSOON, Op. 84
MEMBERS OF THE PHILADELPHIA WOODWIND
QUINTET
(Murray Panitz, Flute; Anthony Gigliotti,
Clarinet; Bernard Garfield, Bassoon)
6. I - Allegretto Commodo 7. II - Slow,
with the utmost tenderness
8. III - Allegro

GUARANTEED HIGH FIDELITY

COLUMBIA
MASTERWORKS

COWELL:

STRING QUARTET NO. 5

THE BEAUX-ARTS STRING QUARTET

(Gerald Tarack and Alan Martin, Violinist;
Jorge Mester, Violist; Bruce Rogers, Cellist)

ML 5788
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 2
(x"Lp"57515)

1. I - Lento
2. II - Allegro
3. III - Andante
4. IV - Presto
5. V - Largo; Allegro marcato

GUARANTEED HIGH FIDELITY

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